PRESENTATION OF BUDGET FOR 1956-57.

[Shri A. J. John (*Finance Minister*) :]

SIR,

I rise to present the Budget Estimates of the State of Travancore-Cochin for the financial year 1956-57. I shall take this opportunity to speak briefly on the broad considerations of policy which have guided the Government in framing the Budget for the ensuing year and to give the House a clear insight into our past achievements and programme for the future.

ECONOMIC CONDITION.

2. A brief review of the economic condition of the State will be helpful in drawing up a constructive programme of work for the future. According to the figures available with the State Directorate of Statistics there are at present nearly 101.64 lakhs of persons in the State consisting of 14.99 lakhs below 5 years, 24.94 lakhs in the ages 5 to 14, 34.50 lakhs between 15 and 34, 19.09 lakhs in the ages 35 to 54 and 8.12 lakhs aged 55 and above. Even though our State has a total area of 58.5 lakhs of acres, the land available for cultivation is only 34.0 lakhs acres. Thus the land *per capita* is only a third of an acre. A direct result of the pressure on land due to a large population has been indiscriminate fragmentation of land holdings. An analysis of the distribution of the land-holdings in the State according to the Land Revenue Records has revealed that 82% of the holdings devoted to cultivation of rice (wet lands) is below one acre, 15% has area between one acre and five acres and only 3% has extent exceeding five acres. In respect of garden lands, 75% has area below one acre, 22% between one to five acres and 3% over five acres.

When we turn to Agricultural Production, we find that cultivation is almost evenly distributed between food and money crops, as far as the major crops are concerned. Money crops are largely affected by conditions of foreign trade and the food crops are practically consumed within the State. Though there has been increase in the production of major food crops, due to the intensive drive for bringing more lands under cultivation and improved methods, production of money crops registered no appreciable change. Simultaneously there has been considerable variation in the price of agricultural commodities such as cocoanut, pepper, tapioca etc., which has affected to a great extent, the agricultural economy of the State. The money crops have been worst affected as the slump in some of them has

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